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## Letter dated 1 August 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I wish to refer to my letter of 17 March 2004 (S/2004/298) informing the President of the Security Council of the progress made by the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, and your reply of 15 April 2004 (S/2004/299), which took note of my intention to continue the activities of the United Nations support team to the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission with funding from the regular budget. In the same spirit, by the present letter, I would like to inform you of the latest achievements and activities undertaken by the Mixed Commission. Through my good offices, and with the support of the United Nations Secretariat, I have been facilitating the implementation of the ruling of the International Court of Justice of 10 October 2002 on the land and maritime boundary between Cameroon and Nigeria.

With a net allotment of just over $9 million from the United Nations regular budget for the biennium 2004-2005, the Mixed Commission has been able to move the process smoothly and peacefully and to keep open dialogue and communication between the two countries. The Commission met every two months until October 2004. In addition, two ad hoc subcommissions, on affected populations and on demarcation, have been established to address specific issues related to the work of the Mixed Commission. The following are some of the activities for which the United Nations team of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission has provided substantive, technical and logistical support.

In order to consolidate the withdrawal and transfer of authority in both areas, the Commission decided to deploy a number of civilian observers for a 12-month period from the date of the withdrawal. The observer team includes representatives of Cameroon, Nigeria and the United Nations. So far, they have reported that the situation in those two areas remains calm and that the issues raised by the affected populations related to their basic needs and rights are being addressed by the local authorities.

To foster confidence among the parties, the Commission has identified a number of projects that aim to promote cross-border cooperation and joint economic activities, which would benefit the local populations on both sides. In addition, a number of reciprocal official visits have taken place in both countries and discussions have started on cross-border cooperation that aims to foster sustainable stability and cooperation between the two countries.

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The Mixed Commission has been able to obtain voluntary contributions to cover the costs related to the work of two military advisers and a legal expert on the maritime boundary. In addition, in kind contributions in the form of logistical support, including accommodation and transportation (car, boats, helicopters), are provided by Cameroon and Nigeria in connection with meetings of the Mixed Commission, field visits to the Lake Chad area, the land boundary and the Bakassi Peninsula.

Moreover, in the context of confidence-building measures between the two countries, the Commission has established contacts with several multilateral financial and development organizations that would finance projects aimed at promoting cross-border cooperation.

Regarding progress on the demarcation exercise, a pilot field assessment was undertaken in March 2005. Its objective was to verify the boundary line, as depicted on preliminary maps produced by the United Nations, and to determine pillar sites. The exercise was important as it sought to establish the modus operandi of the survey of the 1,600 kilometre land boundary, a complex and expensive undertaking. The field assessment of the boundary will be followed by emplacement of pillars, a final survey and final mapping.

Concerning the maritime boundary, in June 2004, the parties agreed on a workplan to include (a) the delineation of the maritime boundary, as delimited by the Court in its 2002 decision, and (b) the production of a map on that basis. It is expected that the process of delimitation of the maritime boundary will continue in the second half of 2005.

I am pleased to report that the two countries have continued to make encouraging and important progress with highly cost-effective support from the United Nations since my last letter in March 2004. On 11 May 2005, I met with the two Presidents to review the work of the Mixed Commission for the fourth time. Both Presidents renewed their commitment to pursue the peaceful implementation of the ruling of the International Court of Justice and to work together to move the process forward until its completion.

I should like to point out that the planned withdrawal and transfer of authority in the Bakassi Peninsula, on 15 September 2004, was delayed due to technical reasons raised by one of the parties. Once it is completed, we would expect the deployment of civilian observers for a 12-month period in order to consolidate the withdrawal and transfer of authority, as was the case earlier in the Lake Chad and the land boundary areas.

The demarcation exercise, expected to last approximately 96 weeks, has been delayed, and pillar emplacement along the boundary will most likely commence in 2006. Before proceeding with the pillar emplacement, the Mixed Commission had, in the first place, to implement the withdrawal and transfer of authority along the land boundary and to agree on technical modalities to be followed by the United Nations surveyors once in the field. While those steps have recently been completed, and while field verification started in March 2005, the financial resources needed to publish the demarcation contracts on the procurement website in order to invite bids are most likely going to be met shortly.

As of today, out of an estimated budget of $12 million for the demarcation of the land boundary, the Mixed Commission has been able to raise voluntary

contributions of $8,150,000, with Cameroon and Nigeria contributing $3 million each, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland £1 million and the European Commission €400,000. In addition, the Mixed Commission has received encouraging indications from the European Commission concerning the possibility of additional voluntary contributions of €4 million to complete the estimated budget.

The Governments of Canada, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Uruguay have provided in kind support for the work of substantive and technical support of the Mixed Commission (military and legal experts), in addition to the logistical support provided by the Governments of Cameroon and Nigeria. The Mixed Commission has also established contacts with multilateral financial and development organizations that have indicated the possibility of financing cross-border economic development projects.

I would like to underscore that, up to 2003, the Mixed Commission was funded entirely from extrabudgetary funds. During 2004-2005, the activities of the Commission were funded through the United Nations regular budget. Given the important tasks that remain at this crucial juncture in the work of the Commission, it is my intention to ask for additional resources from the regular budget for the Commission for 2006 to help advance the peaceful implementation of the ruling of the International Court of Justice.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**